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TOBACCO, ALCOHOL & OTHER DRUGS

How They Can Harm

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Avoid Tobacco, Alcohol and Other Drugs

Tobacco is smoked in cigarettes, cigars and pipes. Second-hand smoke is tobacco smoke in the air.

Snuff is a form of smokeless or spit tobacco that is chewed, sniffed or "dipped."

Alcohol use includes drinking liquor, mixed drinks, beer, wine and wine coolers.

Street (illegal) drugs have many names and forms, and they are used in different ways. Examples of street drugs are cocaine/crack, heroin, marijuana and LSD.

Common household products, such as cleaning fluids, aerosol (spray) cans and glues can be harmful drugs if they are inhaled or huffed. These products are commonly called inhalants.

Medicines (both those prescribed by a doctor and nonprescription drugs such as sleeping pills, pain medicine, cold medicines and diet aids) can be harmful when not used as directed.

Why Is Using Drugs Harmful?

Tobacco

Smoking tobacco increases your risk of lung disease, stroke, heart attack, cancer and having a low birth weight baby.

Using smokeless or spit tobacco increases your risk of gum disease, mouth sores, cancer and high blood pressure.

Breathing second-hand smoke is called "passive" smoking. It is harmful to everyone, especially young children. It increases one's risk of lung problems, cancer, respiratory tract infections and ear infections.

Alcohol

Alcohol is harmful to you if used too often or in large amounts. It can damage your liver and other organs in your body. There is **no safe amount** of alcohol if you are pregnant. If you drink alcohol when you are pregnant, your baby may be born with low birth weight, birth defects and learning disabilities.

Other Drugs

Using street drugs **even once** can harm your body and brain and possibly kill you.

Inhaling or huffing common household cleaning products **even once** can be fatal.

Using medicines other than as directed can be harmful or fatal.

All Drugs

Using tobacco, alcohol and other drugs, even occasionally, can cause you to become "hooked" or dependent on them for life.

If you are thinking about having a baby or if you become pregnant, using tobacco, alcohol and other drugs, including some medicines, can harm your unborn baby.

If you are breastfeeding, using tobacco, alcohol, other drugs and some medicines can affect your breast milk and harm your baby.

Protect Yourself From Drugs

Stopping your use of tobacco, alcohol or other drugs is best. Ask your local WIC clinic or program staff where to get help.

Ask your family and friends to support your decision not to use tobacco, alcohol or other drugs.

Check your local phone book for listings of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA). Also, look under the "smoking" listings of your phone book to find contacts on how to stop smoking.

Protect Your Children From Drugs

If you are breastfeeding and use tobacco, alcohol or medicines, check with your doctor, nurse or other health care provider about how to breastfeed your baby safely.

If you are thinking about having a baby or if you become pregnant, do not use tobacco, alcohol or other drugs. Check with your health care provider before using any medicine.

Set a good example for your children by not using tobacco, alcohol or other drugs.

Sit with your children in non-smoking areas in restaurants and other buildings.

Make "NO SMOKING" a rule inside your home.

Ask others not to smoke around you or your children.

Store household cleaning products and medicines in a locked area out of the reach of your children.

Talk to your children at a young age about why using tobacco, alcohol or other drugs is harmful.

Be aware that persons who use tobacco, alcohol or other drugs place children in their care at risk for accidents, injury and violence.

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Illinois Department of Human Services
Division of Community Health & Prevention
Office of Family Health
Bureau of Family Nutrition
Special Supplemental Nutrition Program
For Women, Infants & Children (**WIC**)
535 W. Jefferson St.
Springfield, IL 62702-5058

For further information, telephone 1-800-323-4769 (Voice and TTY).

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DHS 4453 (N-8-00) WIC - Tobacco, Alcohol & Other Drugs
Printed by the Authority of the State of Illinois.
250,000 copies